2007-05830/

Canada BRITISH COLUMBIA The Best Place on Earth

NEWS RELEASE
COMMUNIQUÉ

For Immediate Release
2007FOR0052-000523
April 26, 2007

Ministry of Forests and Range
Natural Resources Canada

$25.46 MILLION TRANSFERRED TO GWAII TRUST SOCIETY

VICTORIA – The provincial and federal governments have transferred $25.46 million to the Gwaii Forest Charitable Trust to further encourage sustainable forestry and community stability on Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands.

"The local management of forest resources will benefit the people, environment and economy on Haida Gwaii," said Forests and Range Minister Rich Coleman. "Continued sustainable forest management supports Island jobs."

"This transfer of funds means that the community can continue to improve its forest-related economy," said the Honourable Gary Lunn, Minister of Natural Resources. "Their efforts toward responsible development contribute to the federal government's goal of improving the sustainability of Canada's forests."

The governments of British Columbia and Canada each contributed approximately $12 million to the South Moresby Forest Replacement Account (SMFRA) in 1988. The account was created following the creation of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage site. It was established to mitigate the impacts of loss of timber supply and forest-based employment resulting from the establishment of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, by developing employment opportunities in sustainable forest management, research, education, and training.

The money has now been transferred to the newly created Gwaii Forest Charitable Trust, of which the Gwaii Trust Society and two of its directors are the trustees, from the SMFRA. The Gwaii Forest Charitable Trust will use investment income from SMFRA to support projects that contribute to the long-term sustainability of forest resources and community stability on the Islands.

"The health of the Islands communities is tied to the health of the Islands forests," said Ken Rea, chair of the Gwaii Trust Society. "The Islands communities look forward to the growth of the funds held by the new trust and using growing trust income to be part of the solution to our key problem of maintaining stable Islands communities. This is a welcome augmentation of the on-Islands controlled resources which assist Islands communities."

-more-

The Gwaii Trust Society has a 12-year history of successfully enhancing environmentally sustainable social and economic benefits by using income from locally controlled, invested funds to advance economic diversification and sustainable development. The society advocates and supports an Islands community characterized by respect for cultural diversity, the environment, and a sustainable and increasingly self-sufficient economy.

-30-

Media contact:

Jennifer McLarty
Public Affairs Officer
Ministry of Forests and Range
250 387-4592

Andrea Smith
B.C. Assistant
Office of the Minister, Natural Resources Canada
604 666-2662

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.